

EQUALITY STRATEGY FOR CROYDON

2023 - 2027

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FOREWORD

Over the past three years Croydon has seen major change. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on inequalities and transformed the way many of us work. The global rise in the cost of living has put extra strain on our communities. In Croydon, the two Reports in the Public Interest and declaration of Section 114 notices have fundamentally changed how the Council will have to operate in the future. These changes, as well as a new political direction for the Council, have triggered this early refresh of the Council's Equality Strategy 2020-2024.

The Council's public sector equality duty is to advance equality of opportunity, foster good community relations and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. We will have regard to it in all council functions, going further where possible by demonstrating best practice in equality.

Whilst the refreshed strategy keeps almost all the Outcomes and Objectives of its predecessor, it is informed by data from Census 2021 and our progress to date. It reflects the initiatives and activities now under way, including work to deliver the George Floyd Race Matters and Croydon Equality Pledges, and the intended inclusion of Gender and Anti-racism in equality impact assessments of our decisions and policies. The refreshed strategy provides a clear, measurable strategic framework for equality in Croydon.

The Strategy also reflects the unprecedented financial challenge facing the Council and the new direction set out in the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 to transform it into one which balances its books, listens to residents and delivers sound and sustainable local government services. To achieve that, the coming years will see significant transformation of the Council as it seeks to reduce costs. This will inevitably mean doing less, but working hard to be better at what we continue to do. To succeed, we must consider equality from the earliest stage as we design new service models around those who need them most.

Not only does the Council have duties to its residents, it also has responsibilities to its staff as an employer. The work done by our staff, often under very challenging circumstances, is vital to deliver services that are responsive to the needs of our residents. As we transform the way the Council operates, we need to be sure we are listening to our staff, creating a safe inclusive culture for collaboration and challenge and equipping them with the tools and training they need to deliver the change our residents expect. We need to continue tackling pay gaps, ensuring reasonable adjustments are in place and remembering that, like our borough, our employees are a diverse group who should be supported and celebrated. This strategy, alongside the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-26, sets out our updated plans for how we will provide a safe environment that supports our employees' health and wellbeing.

Of course, we cannot achieve our ambition to enhance and embed equality alone. It is a priority for us to become a council which listens to, respects and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities, businesses and other public sector organisations like the NHS. Collectively we will work to make Croydon a place where people feel valued and can have a voice, a place free from prejudice and discrimination.

Jason Perry, Executive Mayor of Croydon

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Council's Equality Strategy is to provide a detailed insight into our ongoing commitment to equality, set out in one place our equality objectives and other arrangements for embedding equality into everything we do and, perhaps most importantly, set out where we will focus improvements.

This refreshed Equality Strategy reflects the exceptional financial and governance challenges facing the Council. Equalities considerations will need to be at the heart of the Council's thinking, given the level of change and service transformation expected over the coming years. This Strategy sets out a framework for the actions we will take, and the values we will be guided by, as the council transforms to reduce costs, improve outcomes and reduce inequality for residents.

Developing the strategy and its objectives

The Council, like other public bodies, must publish information about equality every year and equality objectives every four years. Our approach in 2020 built on the partnership work undertaken the previous year to identify priorities through assessments, surveys and consultation exercises. These activities highlighted issues that need to be addressed in the years ahead. From this information our equality objectives were drafted and adopted after a final consultation.

It should be noted that many council services are currently contributing through their strategies to tackle inequalities and address disadvantage for protected groups across the borough. Some of the equality objectives will be found embedded in other relevant strategies and plans that are published, such as the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Adult Social Care and Health Strategy. Importantly, the absence of an equality issue in these objectives does not mean that it is insignificant, or that we will ignore that issue; rather, it signifies that we focus our effort and limited resource on addressing the greatest inequalities.

Updating the strategy

We have updated the strategy at a time of great change for Croydon. In doing so we have been informed by the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026, the Council's main strategic document, the progress that we have made, and new equality initiatives. We are also giving effect to the Chief Executives London Committee's (CELC) Tackling Racial Inequality Standard. Equality Impact Assessments in Croydon will consider anti-racism and gender in addition to protected characteristics specified by the Equality Act 2010. Key to delivering this strategy will be the allocation of limited resources to deliver positive outcomes, as far as is practicable at a time when the organisation is under significant financial pressure.

This strategy supports the following objectives of the Mayor's Business Plan:

- **Become a council which listens to, respects and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities** through committing to work with residents to better understand our communities by increasing our network across seldom heard groups; to use data about local communities to inform decisions and improve services; and to ensure services proactively target groups that have accessibility issues as a result of age, mental health, disability, language, digital and or physical barriers. We will also develop our understanding of the intersectionality between protected characteristics.
- **Develop our workforce to deliver in a manner that respects the diversity of our communities** through ensuring it reflects our diverse communities at all levels and receives regular, updated equality training, holding ourselves to account and tackling systemic issues concerning equality issues and becoming an anti-racist organisation.
- **Deliver a vibrant London Borough of Culture which showcases local talent and supports Croydon's recovery** through a programme that reflects the borough authentically and shines a light on our diverse communities.
- **Support the local economy and enable residents to upskill and access job opportunities** through ensuring that people with protected characteristics are able to benefit.
- **Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential** through enabling better education outcomes by groups who need support and addressing inequalities that lead to school exclusions and young people entering the criminal justice system.
- **Tackle anti-social behaviour, knife crime and violence against women and girls so that Croydon feels safer** through committing to the development of a strategy to tackle violence against women and girls.

- **Work with partners and the voluntary community and faith sector (VCFS) to promote independence, health and wellbeing and keep vulnerable adults safe** through committing to joint work to ensure equitable access to health and care services and enable residents to know where and how to access services.
- **Work closely with health services and the VCFS to improve resident health and reduce health inequalities** through committing to joint work to understand and reduce health inequalities.

Progress highlights

Over recent years we have made significant progress delivering the Equality Strategy 2020-2024, for example:

- An improvement in the proportion of staff preferring not to disclose their equality information between 2019/20 and 2022/23, e.g. from 32% to 20% for ethnicity; 34% to 22% for disability; and 36% to 23% for sexual orientation
- The gender pay gap for council staff was eliminated and the disability pay gap is low.
- There has been a general improvement in reducing the gap between the council's staffing profile and Croydon's population in terms of ethnicity.
- Developed the Equalities Pledge and George Floyd Race Matters Pledge in 2022, to engender a societal change in the borough and cultural change at the Council, other Croydon places of employment and voluntary and community groups. 37 organisations signed up to one or both. We will continue to encourage other community, voluntary and faith groups along with businesses and statutory organisations to adopt the pledges.
- Adopted the all-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims' definition of Islamophobia in January 2022.
- Croydon Council was designated a Spotlight Organisation for Race Equality Week in 2022 and 2023.
- Introduced Tea Break staff meetings to raise awareness on equality issues and support culture change. Received the Bronze Trailbreaker Award for Tea Breaks from Race Equality Matters in November 2022
- Developed a Guardian's Programme to give employees a safe space to talk about issues of concern relating to the organisational culture, bullying or other forms of inappropriate behaviour.
- Council staff diversity network groups have supported change to our workforce profile by their visibility of staff diversity through awareness raising events, communications campaigns and role modelling. Two new staff network groups were integrated into council decision making process: the Christian Network in May 2022 and the Young Professionals Network in February 2023.

We have established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Internal Control Board which meets every month to provide equality governance and coordinate arrangements for monitoring progress against the strategy and for embedding equality into council functions. Progress is reported to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet. Supported by the Council's Equality Programme Manager, the EDI Board has been responsible for overseeing the review of this strategy.

We will strive to ensure that the equality objectives in this strategy are owned by all leaders, managers and employees and embedded across the organisation, through commitments in service plans, personal objective setting and pledges. The EDI Board will hold directorates to account on progress in implementing this strategy. We will report on the implementation of this plan every year, using updates from all directorates and partnerships that own the objectives, measures and actions, to ensure that council policies and practice take account of our progress, the lessons we have learnt, and any emerging and prevalent national and local priorities. Ahead of the development of a new equality strategy for 2027-2031, we will conduct a comprehensive analysis of our measures and progress to date.

We face difficult decisions ahead and cannot do everything we would like or see a need for. We will however improve our work with our partners and our communities to meet rising demand and the challenges ahead, while remaining conscious that equality, diversity and inclusion must be at the heart of the design and delivery of our services and the achievement of best value.

PLAN ON A PAGE

VISION

Croydon is a place of opportunity where everyone can belong, addressing the needs and aspirations of all who live and work in the borough

The Council addresses social inequities as a community leader and employer

- OBJECTIVE 1: The Council acts as a role model and champions a fair society.
- OBJECTIVE 2: Continue to increase our network across underserved groups.
- OBJECTIVE 3: Data about local communities is more effectively collected, analysed and used to inform decisions and improve services.
- OBJECTIVE 4: The Council's workforce reflects our diverse communities at all levels.
- OBJECTIVE 5: We ensure equality training is central to the way we work, is regularly undertaken, and is reviewed to meet changing needs.
- OBJECTIVE 6: Council staff proactively hold challenging, targeted conversations, holding ourselves to account, listening, learning, believing and taking action on systemic issues concerning inequality.
- OBJECTIVE 7: The Council demonstrates that it is becoming an inclusive, diverse and anti-racist organisation, by embedding this principle in its strategies, decision-making, actions and behaviours, and promotes anti-racist practices.

Strong partner working ensures improved access to opportunities and meets individual needs as they arise

- OBJECTIVE 1: Information about the Council's work towards tackling inequality is easy to access and understand.
- OBJECTIVE 2: Enable better education outcomes by offering support to groups who need it most.
- OBJECTIVE 3: Systemic inequalities that lead to school exclusions and young people entering the criminal justice system are addressed.
- OBJECTIVE 4: Support the creation of jobs that enhance quality of life.
- OBJECTIVE 5: Services are proactive in targeting groups that have accessibility issues.

People in Croydon are supported to lead healthier and independent lives for longer

- OBJECTIVE 1: Work with partners to tackle social isolation.
- OBJECTIVE 2: Work with our partners to understand and reduce health inequalities.
- OBJECTIVE 3: Work with our partners to ensure equitable access to health and care services and enable residents to know where and how to access services.

OUTCOME ONE:

The Council addresses social inequities as a community leader and an employer

The Council believes in the dignity of all people and their right to respect and equality of opportunity. We are proud of the diversity of our staff and residents and regard this as a strength of our borough. Our aspiration is for Croydon to be safe, welcoming and inclusive. Our People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-26 aims to build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace. The Council recognises its role as both a community leader and an employer reducing inequalities and championing a fairer society. Strong, visible leadership is essential to embed equality, anti-racism and zero tolerance of all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying in the organisation and the community. For this reason, in 2022 we co-created and adopted the Borough-wide [Equalities Pledge](#) and [George Floyd Race Matters Pledge](#) (Appendix 2), which we encourage other organisations in the Borough to adopt.

Objective 1: The Council acts as a role model and champions a fair society.

We believe equality is everyone's business: all staff, including anyone we work with or commission to work on our behalf, must advance equality, promote good relations and eliminate discrimination in their work. The Council should continue to lead by example and demonstrably comply with the statutory Public Sector Equality Duty in the services it delivers directly, as well as those it commissions from other providers. It should also seek to influence other organisations and partners to advance equality, diversity and inclusion.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensure our Equality Impact Assessments are data and evidence driven.2. Ensure that council contracts comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.3. Encourage other organisations to adopt the Equality Pledge and George Floyd Race Matters Pledge.4. Promote equality of opportunity for individuals of all protected characteristics by recognising and promoting significant celebrations and awareness days and ensuring that workplace practices do not discriminate against any groups.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Equalities pledges have been incorporated into the practice of the Council and promoted to Croydon's VCFS, statutory organisations and businesses.2. More Croydon organisations are registered as signatories to the pledges.3. Every new strategy, service plan and staff appraisal has equality objectives.4. All Council contracts comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.5. Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) are data driven and demonstrate evidence and impact (where change has been made in relation to the EQIA).

We will also:

5. Ensure that every new strategy, service plan and staff appraisal has an equality objective linked to it and reflects our commitment to anti-racism.
6. Develop a culture in the Council which puts equality at the centre of service delivery through delivery of the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-26.
7. Develop a three-year partnership plan to tackle violence against women and girls.
8. Develop a youth safety plan with partners and young people to reduce serious youth violence and exploitation.
9. Develop with our community partners a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2024-2028 as well as a financial inclusion strategy for council tenants.
10. As part of Borough of Culture, have a cultural programme that reflects Croydon authentically, is accessible to all and highlights communities that have been under-represented through ways such as film screenings and museum exhibitions.

Objective 2: Continue to increase our network across groups that are underserved

While we engage meaningfully with large parts of the community, like other councils we must continue to develop better ways of reaching those groups that are underserved, for example LGBT+, refugees, asylum seekers, homeless people, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers, people with disabilities including those with communication impairments. Given the scale of change in Croydon, it is important that the voices of all communities are heard. Drawing on the 2021 Census data, our Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) will enable us to consider the best methods to consult and identify which groups we need to do more to reach. We will review our corporate approach to community engagement and produce guidance for council services on their consultations and engagements to support inclusion and demographic diversity. We will also introduce a resident survey to increase the opportunity for local people to give their feedback on the Council, its policies and culture.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Establish and embed effective arrangements for participation to ensure that the voice of the child and the voice of the parent/carer informs service delivery improvement. 12. Co-design new resident voices model for adult social care to enable people with lived experience to contribute to policy making, commissioning and service delivery. 13. Ensure service user surveys contain “how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the council listens and acts on your feedback”. <p>We will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Review our corporate approach to community engagement, to ensure that it is effective in reaching all communities including minoritised groups and promotes a culture of sustained and equitable engagement and participation within all areas of the organisation. 15. Actively listen to and take account of resident feedback, give guidance to services on their consultations and engagements, and introduce a resident survey. 16. Hold regular question time sessions with the Executive Mayor around the borough. 17. Ensure formal consultations and service user surveys collect data on protected characteristics of respondents and use this data to identify and target improvements to services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Baseline data on who is engaging with the Council enables us to focus efforts on engaging with those who are not; ongoing data tracks progress. 7. We have clearer data on service user satisfaction and know where we are doing well and where we must improve. 8. The Council engages with all communities and seeks to involve residents as much as possible to co-create services and define actions to tackle inequalities and promote anti racist practice. 9. Young people, parents, carers and adult social care users feel that improvement of the services they access is informed by their views. 10. The Council listens to and responds to views from all communities and gives feedback on how this is incorporated into decisions to ensure transparency and trust are maintained.

Objective 3: Data about local communities is more effectively collected, analysed and used to inform decisions and improve services.

Good policy development should be informed by accurate, comprehensive and timely equality information from the outset wherever possible to allow policies to target resources and improve outcomes for those who need it most. Currently, data mostly relates to age, gender, disability and ethnicity with lower levels of data held about other minoritised groups. Our information is not always sophisticated enough to allow us to draw useful inferences, for example our data on religious/faith groups; people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender; members of newer communities, and some other protected characteristics, depends on the 2021 Census which will become outdated with time. To improve decision making further, we will develop a consistent approach to data collection and quality across the organisation with a lens for inequalities.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <p>18. Support staff to improve the collection of accurate, complete and up to date equality data about the Croydon population and council service users.</p> <p>19. Use equality data and information intelligently to inform priorities and policies, as well as target interventions and resources.</p> <p>We will also:</p> <p>20. Adopt gender as a local characteristic to ensure that we continue to hear the voices of people who identify differently from their sex identified at birth. EQIAs to consider both sex and gender separately.</p>	<p>11. Standardised equalities data is captured by council services and is updated, shared, analysed and used to help inform decisions, policies and service improvements.</p>

Objective 4: The Council's workforce reflects our diverse communities at all levels.

For the Council to serve the people of Croydon effectively, its workforce needs to reflect the borough's population at all levels of the organisation – from front line staff to strategic decision-makers. Progress has been made on this front and the proportion of staff preferring not to disclose their equality information is falling significantly. The council workforce is becoming more representative of the borough's population in terms of ethnicity and sex. Croydon has not seen gender and disability median pay gaps in recent years. However, there is more to do to tackle the ethnicity pay gap and to reflect our borough's diversity, particularly at senior levels of the organisation and at grade 15 and above. This requires further work to eliminate conscious and unconscious bias at all stages of the employee cycle: recruitment; induction and supervision; training and development; retention and reward; and disciplinary and grievances.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Support staff to share their equality data to improve the disclosure rates by increasing understanding of how we use it to drive positive change. 22. Develop annual performance indicators to measure recruitment, learning and development, career progression and employee relations, analyse and publish data and take action to address identified trends. 23. Publish an annual pay audit by gender, disability and ethnicity and implement an action plan to reduce the gaps. 24. Ensure all council recruitment panels represent the diversity of Croydon's population wherever possible. 25. Use anonymous recruitment processes which don't reveal details of race, age, gender, disability or socio-economic status. 26. Provide reasonable adjustments for disabled staff in interviews and employment. 27. Positively encourage applications from diverse and under-represented groups when advertising for posts and taking actions to respond to under representation in this area identified by organisational data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Equality disclosure rate among council staff is increased to at least 85%. 13. Published data shows that the council workforce's profile reflects Croydon's communities and under-represented groups - including at grade 15 and above. 14. More staff from all under-represented protected characteristics participate on available leadership programmes. 15. Gender and disability pay gaps in the Council remain at zero and the ethnicity pay gap continues to reduce and remains below the London average.

Objective 5: The Council ensures equality training is central to the way we work, is regularly undertaken, and is reviewed to meet changing needs.

We will develop our workforce to deliver in a manner that respects the diversity of our communities. In working towards this aim, we regularly review the training in equality, diversity and inclusion provided to all staff, so they gain the relevant knowledge and skills to mainstream equality best practice. Councillors will receive training too. We will also run action leadership and talent development programmes for staff from minoritised groups.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <p>28. Review current equality skills, knowledge and training available to meet service needs and identify gaps.</p> <p>We will also:</p> <p>29. Ensure that all staff complete mandatory training in equality, diversity and inclusion, including anti-racism, every two years, attendance is monitored and managers are held to account; all officers who write reports to complete EQIA training.</p> <p>30. Provide training in equality, diversity and inclusion, now including anti-racism, for Councillors in line with staff training. Member attendance will be reported to the Ethics Committee.</p>	<p>16. All new starters (officers and Members) have completed Equality Essentials, conscious inclusion training and other appropriate designated training.</p> <p>17. Consistent high-quality of EQIAs.</p> <p>18. Equalities training is regularly reviewed.</p>

Objective 6: Council staff proactively hold challenging, targeted conversations, holding ourselves to account, listening, learning, believing and taking action on systemic issues concerning inequality.

We will ensure a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying from employees, residents, customers and service users, publicising the staff code of conduct and providing staff with information on what it is. We will encourage people to safely challenge negative behaviours, including bias and the use of stereotypes, ensuring that they are not treated less favourably for doing so. We will build on the successful ‘Tea Talks’ and staff Guardians programmes to ensure safe spaces are in place to increase the staff voice and engagement, including supporting our range of staff diversity networks (Race Equality Network, Disability Network, Women’s Network, LGBT+Allies Network, Carers Network, Christian Network, Croydon Young Staff Network and Mental Health and Wellbeing Network). We will support our managers to manage diverse teams and resolve equity related issues by ensuring that we have equipped them with the knowledge and skills to do so.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will:</p> <p>31. Ensure a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying, publicising the staff code of conduct, providing staff with information on what it is and encouraging people to safely challenge this where it occurs ensuring that people are not treated less favourably for doing so.</p> <p>32. Ensure reasonable adjustments are available (including when working from home) for those who need them, including reflecting the needs of neurodiverse staff.</p> <p>33. Conduct pulse surveys to identify the impact of organisational actions on employees’ lived experience and psychological safety at work and ask: ‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Council as your employer listens and acts on your feedback?’</p> <p>34. Continue the programme of ‘tea talks’ for staff exploring issues, led by staff networks, to create safe spaces for collective staff learning and discussion.</p> <p>35. Ensure leadership and project meetings at all levels dedicate time to EDI issues, creating actions, identifying inequalities, tracking progress against the equality strategy, and ensuring accountability.</p>	<p>19. Staff and managers feel safe to discuss their lived experience and be their authentic selves at work with no expectation of retaliation.</p> <p>20. Tackling race inequality is part of everyday conversation. This is measured in pulse surveys.</p> <p>21. Employee surveys show an increase in satisfaction levels.</p> <p>22. Senior leaders personally challenge race and other inequalities and drive an improvement agenda. They are able to demonstrate instances of allyship around anti-racist practice and race-related issues.</p> <p>23. Senior leaders and managers demonstrate their commitment to equality in decision-making and have specific equality, diversity and inclusion performance objectives and accountabilities, including tackling racial inequalities.</p>

Objective 7: The Council demonstrates that it is becoming an inclusive, diverse and anti-racist organisation, by embedding this principle in its strategies, decision-making, actions and behaviours, and promotes anti-racist practices.

We want to go beyond compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and become a council which actively champions the values and behaviours of a diverse and inclusive organisation committed to continuous improvement. Our People and Cultural Transformation Strategy supports the cultural and behavioural change required at all levels of the organisation. Alongside this, we are piloting the Chief Executives London Committee (CELC) Tackling Racial Inequality Standard. We will apply the good practice we learn from this beyond race equality to all our equalities work.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36. Adopt the London Councils anti-racist statement at Cabinet in September 2023 and develop anti-racist framework for Croydon which embeds anti-racism in our strategies, actions, behaviours, EQIAs and decision making. 37. Building on action 31 above, commit to zero tolerance of racism from employees, residents, customers, suppliers and service users by challenging racist behaviour or stereotypes expressed by individuals. 38. Deliver positive action leadership and talent development programmes for staff from all minoritised groups. 39. Establish reciprocal mentoring partnerships between Corporate Management Team / Senior Leadership and Global Majority staff and other racialised and minoritised staff. 40. Engage with staff to explore anti-racism and how it can be promoted through employment practice and service delivery. 41. Conduct pulse surveys of staff, firstly to establish a baseline of how many consider the Council to be an anti-racist organisation and then to assess improvement. 42. Seek feedback from the public on whether they consider the Council to be an anti-racist organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24. Race and equality considerations are visibly evaluated and reflected in our strategies and action plans. They are clearly communicated to staff, residents, suppliers and partners and embedded into processes and procedures. 25. The organisation can evidence change/improvement in habits, behaviours and ways of working via informal and formal mechanisms such as staff surveys, staff networks, and feedback across all levels in the organisation. 26. The impact of anti-racist training delivered to the workforce is visible in the council's culture and an increasing percentage of residents and staff consider the Council to be an anti-racist organisation. 27. Reciprocal mentoring enables Global Majority employees to learn from the experience of senior staff, who in turn learn from the experiences of Global Majority and other racialised council colleagues and develop a better understanding of how to tackle racial inequality in the workplace.

OUTCOME TWO:

Strong partner working ensures improved access to opportunities and meets individual needs as they arise.

Our goal is to break the cycle of inter-generational disadvantage starting in early childhood and reoccurring throughout life and improve the outcomes for all our residents, but particularly those experiencing inadequate housing, poor diet, lack of access to decent open spaces and other factors which compound disadvantage for those from less well-off backgrounds. There is a clear linkage between poverty and underserved communities. Data for 2021/22, for example, show that in the UK the proportion of people in relative poverty after housing costs was 31% for families in which someone had a disability, compared with 18% for those where nobody was disabled. This means that family income, excluding disability benefits, was below 60% of average household income. Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 show that some ethnic groups also face much higher rates of relative poverty after housing costs than others, particularly those who are from a Bangladeshi ethnic group (53%), Pakistani (49%) or Black (40%), compared with those from a White ethnic group (19%). The Council cannot tackle the underlying causes of inequality alone, but we will seek to use our partnerships to tackle the inequality of life chances. For instance, with our community partners we will develop a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2024-2028 as well as a financial inclusion strategy for council tenants. Progress will require a concerted effort from the Council and its partners.

Objective 1: Information about the council's work towards tackling inequality is easy to access and understand.

We will be open and transparent about what we are doing to tackle inequality, the progress we have made as well as the challenges we face. Equality data is published on the Croydon Observatory, to ensure that voluntary, community and faith sector partners, health colleagues and partners can use the information and the Council to work with them to identify gaps, assess needs, set priorities and equalities objectives.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide open and transparent communications about our progress against equality objectives:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- publish an accessible equality annual report demonstrating progress and share this with our community and partners.- Continue to publish up-to-date equality data on the Croydon Observatory.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Equalities information and progress against objectives is published regularly on the Croydon Observatory. This is easy to access and understand.2. The Council uses consistent and understandable terminology which is explained and accessible to residents.

We will also:

- 2. Use the terms Global Majority, racialised groups and minoritised groups in everyday conversation, articles, reports and strategies, explaining why they are needed (see Glossary at Appendix 1).
- 3. Use the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), definition of anti-Semitism and All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims definition of Islamophobia as adopted by full Council. (See Glossary)

Objective 2: Enable better education outcomes by offering support to vulnerable groups in targeted areas of the borough, including boys and those eligible for the PPG (pupil premium grant).

Progress has been made improving education outcomes in Croydon in recent years, but there remain significant inequalities in attainment. The early years challenge is the most profound for the borough as a whole and particularly for children from specific racialised groups, namely the African and African Caribbean communities. Training and challenge are offered to school leaders on adultification and other topics which help to safeguard and improve outcomes for these groups. We focus on developing inclusive practices for schools, including anti-racist strategies in conversations with school leaders. Children getting free school meals in Croydon have access to a range of year-round activities and provisions aimed at raising their attainment.

What actions will we take?

What will success look like?

We will continue to:

- 4. Work in partnership with all Croydon schools, settings and partners to share best practice, deliver the very best for all our young people and ensure resources are targeted at intervening in exclusion and suspension practices where issues of disproportionality arise.
- 5. Analyse the achievement of specific pupil groups and take action to enable better outcomes to address gaps.
- 6. Signpost to information available on education, training and employment opportunities, qualifications and careers guidance,

- 3. A narrower outcome gap for groups identified as underachieving, especially at Key Stages 1, 2, 4 and 5.
- 4. A higher % of residents from protected groups and disadvantaged areas gaining qualifications (inc. English) and training opportunities via Croydon Adult Learning and Training (CALAT).

<p>including basic English skills, post-16 provision, financial management and additionally guidance for over-50s.</p> <p>7. Share best practice and learn from our partners, for example through the Pupil Premium Network, to include best practice on wellbeing and emotional needs support.</p>	
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Objective 3: Systemic inequalities that lead to school exclusions and young people entering the criminal justice system are addressed

Improving outcomes for young people is best achieved when they are able to remain in school. We work to improve attendance of all pupils but with areas of focus on White working-class boys, boys of African and African Caribbean heritage, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers and those accessing free school meals, through frontline engagement workers and the Team Around the School model.

<p>What actions will we take?</p>	<p>What will success look like?</p>
<p>We will continue to:</p> <p>8. In partnership with the health service, work with education and training settings to listen to the voice of children and young people on their mental wellbeing, the availability of pastoral and therapeutic support in schools, and their links to support networks outside schools.</p> <p>9. Monitor attendance and exclusion rates and take action to address over-representation where identified.</p>	<p>5. Increase in the percentage of young people who feel they are listened to - including looked after children and young carers.</p> <p>6. Improved school attendance and reduced suspension and permanent exclusion rates for all identified groups.</p> <p>7. Reduced proportion of Global Majority and other racialised young people listed for youth justice cautions, conditional cautions and community resolutions ('out of court disposals').</p>

Objective 4: Support the creation of jobs that enhance quality of life, particularly targeting those under-represented in the employment sector

We want to build an inclusive economy in Croydon, supporting the creation of fair employment and good quality jobs for local people. The long-term unemployed which is statistically more likely to include the over-50s, disabled people, Global Majority and other racialised groups, women, young people, lone parents, and people with mental health diagnosis, as well as those lacking basic English skills or with low levels of literacy, are most likely to face barriers to full employment, as people with established work skills and experience re-enter the employment market. Some of the most disadvantaged people often lack basic information and skills. Every major ethnic group in London has seen a fall in the proportion of people who are not in paid work in the decade up to 2022.

In Croydon some communities were further away from the jobs market than others. According to the 2021 census, the Bangladeshi population of working age had the highest rate of economic inactivity (40.4%), followed by Pakistani residents (40.3%). This compares with residents from Indian and White ethnic backgrounds who had the lowest rates (25.1% and 24.2% respectively). With regard to disability, 12.2% of working age residents who had a work-limiting disability were unemployed, compared with 5.6% of those who did not. Age is also a factor: 87.0% of residents aged 25-49 had a job in 2022, compared with 72.5% of those aged 50-64.

The Council's apprenticeship programme works with providers to support 300 businesses to develop training programmes and new employment pathways for Croydon residents. 324 employers have adopted the Good Work Standard that provides employers with a set of best employment practice.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Engage with local employers to increase the number and range of apprenticeships, work experience placements, improve access to career opportunities, and pay the London Living Wage. 11. Promote the Good Work Standard in Croydon and support new and emerging entrepreneurs from underserved communities. 12. Working with the South London Partnership, use the Work and Health Programme to ensure that residents with disabilities, care leavers and those further away from the job market receive targeted personalised support into employment. 13. Work with the education sector and others to increase the number of people with the skills needed to contribute to our local digital economy. <p>We will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Ensure a renewed Economic Growth Strategy creates inclusive education and employment opportunities for Croydon residents, including those with protected characteristics who are most likely to be impacted socio-economically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Fewer 16-18 year olds are not in education, employment or training. 9. 200 residents a year supported into work through Croydon Works. 10. There is an Increase In the number and range of apprenticeships and work placements provided by local employers.

Objective 5: Services are proactive in targeting groups that have accessibility issues.

Breaking down barriers to accessing services is vital if we are to ensure our residents have fair and equitable opportunities. These barriers can arise as a result of disability, age, mental health, language, digital and/ or physical barriers, and seeking asylum. We will continue to support access to translation and accommodate the needs of sight and hearing-impaired staff and members of the public. As digital access increases, we will continue to design services to best meet the needs of citizens, ensuring technology is an enabler rather than a barrier to service improvements and access. In recent years the Council has worked with community partners to support asylum seekers temporarily placed in the borough, including a disproportionately high number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. The support includes English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) provision, community integration and school places for these groups. The Council will continue to fulfil its duties to them whilst pressing government to fund the full cost of this support and to ensure accommodation standards are improved.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Raise awareness of our partner support services, such as for translation, interpretation, Braille, easy read and digital support and hearing impairment support. 16. Use data collected by services about accessibility to inform equality analyses. 17. Design services to best meet the needs of all residents, including an appreciation and mitigations to ensure residents do not become digitally excluded. 18. Support asylum seekers with access to English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) provision, community integration and school places for these groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. The default for service user satisfaction surveys includes the collection and monitoring of protected characteristics. 12. Service assessments, user research and co-design are increasingly used as the basis of service improvements. 13. Digital services also offer alternative access routes for the digitally excluded. 14. Asylum seekers are able to integrate in the community.

OUTCOME THREE:

People in Croydon are supported to lead healthier and independent lives for longer

The Council's [Adult Social Care and Health Strategy 2022-25](#) details how we will achieve our vision for adult social care: residents should live as independent lives as possible; carers are supported in their caring role and our adults at risk of abuse or neglect are kept safe from harm. In delivering this strategy, our mission is to make the best use of available resources to keep people in Croydon safe and independent.

The strategic approach is to:

- Prevent need through universal services promoting wellbeing.
- Reduce need, with targeted interventions for those at risk.
- Delay need, through reablement, rehabilitation and recovery.
- Meet need through progressive planning, using a broad set of social resources.

We will identify and reduce any inequality in care quality or access to care, ensuring service users can experience positive outcomes and be supported with regard to physical and mental wellbeing. We will also support [Croydon's Autism Strategy 2021-24](#), developed with NHS partners and Croydon Mencap to make life easier for thousands of autistic residents and their families and increase awareness and understanding of autism across the whole of our population. In June 2023 Croydon became a dementia friendly borough. We will support Croydon's Dementia Strategic Plan developed with NHS partners and Croydon Dementia Action Alliance to make life easier for our residents living with dementia, their families and carers.

Objective 1: Work with partners to further tackle social isolation.

Multiple and complex risk factors can influence social isolation and loneliness. These range from level of education, employment status, wealth, income, housing, crime, ethnicity, gender, disability, age and mental health. These risks factors are more likely to affect some groups, such as people with mental health needs, people with dementia, refugees and asylum seekers. Taking on full time unpaid caring duties can also lead to being more isolated, with these roles likely to be performed by women. Social isolation and loneliness disproportionately affect groups that share protected characteristics and can compound discrimination and disadvantage they experience.

At a time when council budgets are stretched, work with the VCFS will be key to recognising untapped possibilities within every community. We will continue to encourage council staff to volunteer on social priorities in Croydon. We will also work with South West London Integrated Care Board and GP practices to support outreach services, work within communities to signpost socially isolated

people to services and promote online and offline directories of services. This can have a positive impact on mental health and social isolation and reduce the use of costly statutory services. We have commissioned a volunteering brokerage service which will enable VCFS organisations and others to access volunteers, and people who want to volunteer to find out local volunteering opportunities. Befriending is one of the categories of volunteering, which will help to reduce social isolation. We are also promoting volunteering as a form of social value to contractors and collaborating with Friends of Parks groups.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with VCFS partners to increase the number of volunteers and volunteering opportunities. 2. Work with Health partners to support outreach services and signpost socially isolated people to outreach and support services. <p>We will also:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Develop a menu of volunteering options and encourage Council staff to use their volunteer days on social priorities, for example supporting work to reduce social isolation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council staff are aware of volunteering days, and we know the number of staff hours given. 2. Positive impacts on social isolation are reported from the beneficiaries of staff volunteering.

Objective 2: Work with our partners to understand and reduce health inequalities.

Health inequalities are avoidable, unfair and systematic differences in health between different groups of people. They can involve differences in health; access to care; quality and experience of care; behavioural risks to health (for example, smoking or alcohol use); and wider determinants of health (such as quality of housing or employment) (The King's Fund, 2022). The health inequalities that existed within Croydon before the Covid-19 pandemic have increased. The [Director of Public Health Report 2022](#) highlights differences in health outcomes between the most and the least deprived wards: in life expectancy at birth; low birth weight; obesity; emergency hospital admissions; the incidence of all cancers; and deaths. We want to close the gaps by identifying and tackling these issues at a local level using a collaborative approach and joint engagement from all partners and communities.

The Council will work with partners and the voluntary, community and faith sector to promote independence, health and wellbeing and keep vulnerable adults safe as set out in [Croydon's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024](#). The strategy's overarching principles are: reducing inequalities (with people experiencing the worst health improving their health the fastest); focusing on prevention (which includes addressing avoidable harm caused by inequality); and increased integration (to provide joined up health and care services). We are currently reviewing the carers strategy due to be completed in 2024.

What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Work with partners to implement the Croydon Health and Wellbeing Strategy. 5. Listen to underserved groups and protected groups most likely to be impacted such as autistic people and people living with dementia and their carers, and take account of their views when we commission and develop health services. <p>We will also:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Target health checks to eligible residents identified as high risk and/or living in areas of high deprivation. 7. Respond to the recommendations of the Director of Public Health Report 2022. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Earlier interventions across organisations to prevent greater support needs later in childhood for particular groups – e.g., those who are autistic. 4. The views of protected groups and particularly seldom heard groups such as autistic people and people living with dementia are taken into account when we commission and develop health services. 5. Increase in the number of delivery providers of health checks in the community.
<p>Objective 3: Work with our partners to ensure equitable access to health and care services and enable residents to know where and how to access services.</p> <p>Co-locating services makes it far easier for residents to access services, particularly in the health, care and community sector. By working with partners, we will continue to define, map and develop community hubs to bring support services closer to residents. As part of this, local people will be empowered to identify the needs most important to them and how they should be addressed. We work with social prescribers, social workers, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and residents to support the development of hubs which bring together complementary services and make it easier for residents to access.</p>	
What actions will we take?	What will success look like?
<p>We will continue to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Work with partners to implement the Croydon Health and Wellbeing Strategy and develop a new strategy for 2024 onwards. 9. Continue to support the development of local community partnerships and hubs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Raised awareness among residents around prevention and where and how they can receive support. 7. A Health Inequalities Outcomes Framework is developed and embedded in practice across partnership groups, e.g. Croydon Health and Care Board and Health and Wellbeing Board.

We will also:

10. Support the NHS to develop new Health Centres to increase access to primary care, community services and work with the voluntary sector, to reduce inequalities in access to health and social care across the borough.
11. Work as part of a Croydon system to reduce barriers to access mental health services and support shifts to more culturally appropriate provision, for example by maximising the impact of and amplifying the learning from the Ethnic Minority Health Improvement Project (EMHIP) work and South London Listens.
12. Develop an updated multi-agency harm reduction and suicide prevention strategy.

Key Statistics



- 390,727 current total population (highest in London)
- 406,650 population by 2031 and just under 500,000 by 2050.
- 0-19 years – 97,925 (highest in London)
- 20-64 years – 239, 761 (highest in London)
- 65+ - 53, 114 (3rd highest in London)
- 48% male
- 52% female

Croydon has the largest population of all the boroughs in London. The 2021 Census shows that its population has grown by 7.5% (27,349) since 2011 and life expectancy at birth is continuing to increase for both males and females.

For further information on the Croydon's population overview [click here](#).

Age Profile in Croydon

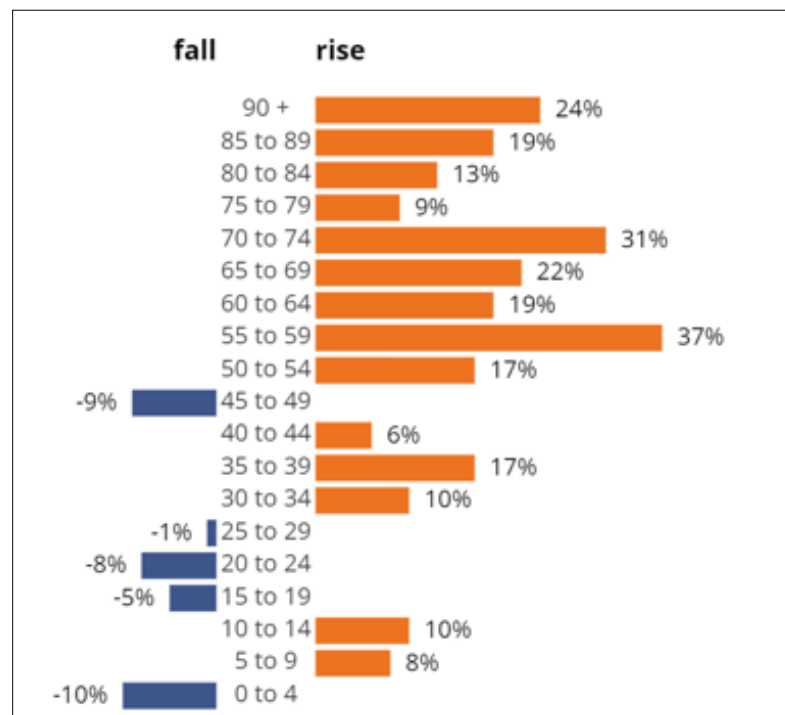
The 2021 Census shows that Croydon has the most people aged 0-19 years and 20-64 years in London, and the third most over-65s. The 0-19 age group makes up 25% of the borough's population, 20-64 year olds represent 61.4% of the borough's population and over 65s make up 13.6% of the Croydon population.

Croydon's large young population makes it the youngest borough in London. This has implications on the types of support that are required to cater to this demographic such as providing sufficient

education provision, training and employment opportunities, childcare and children's social care. The number of looked after children in Croydon remains the highest in London.

There has also been a large increase (19.7%) since 2011 in over-65s. This is much larger than the increases in other age groups, with only a 1.9% increase in people aged 0-15 and a 7% increase in people aged 16-64. The increase in people aged 75+ in particular has significant implications on adult social care costs, which are very high in Croydon in comparison to other London boroughs.

Population change (%) by age group in Croydon 2011-2021

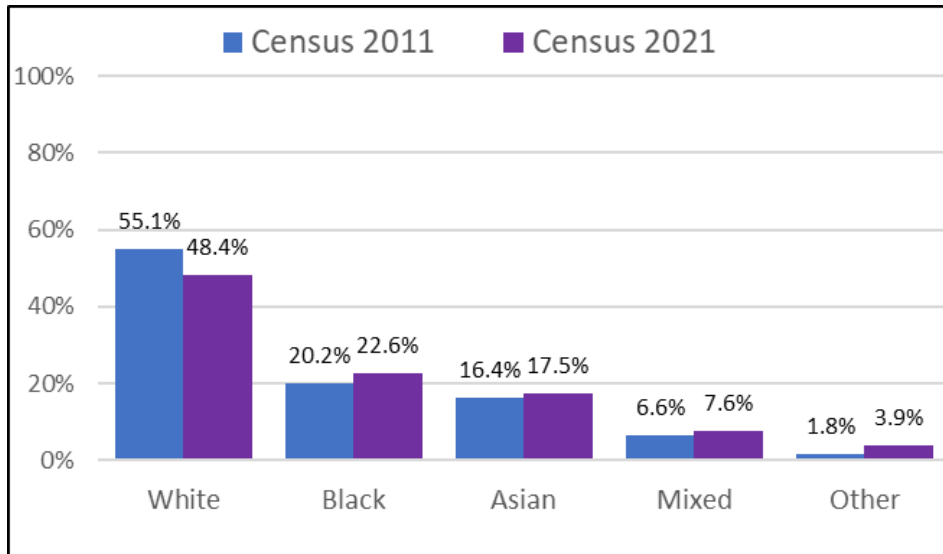


For a London borough, Croydon has the most care homes and until recently the most expensive cost per head for adult social care. This has implications on which types of residents can access quality care, in particular those with protected characteristics. However, Croydon's cost per head is now falling more in line with the London and national averages which may improve accessibility.

For further information on children and young people in Croydon [click here](#). For further information on the overall age profile of the people in Croydon [click here](#).

Ethnicity

Change in Croydon's broad ethnic group profile 2011-2021



Croydon is one of London's most diverse boroughs with over half (51.6%) of its population from Global Majority and other racialised backgrounds. The figures for these ethnic groups have all increased

since 2011. The remaining 48.4% of Croydon's population identify as white, which has decreased since 2011.

The large diversity of Croydon's population has significant implications for equalities. The diverse needs of residents must be met across all areas of life in the borough, such as in education, employment, housing and social care.

For further information on Croydon's breakdown by ethnicity [click here](#).

Deprivation

Croydon has become relatively less deprived compared to other local authorities in England between the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) published in 2015 and the latest IMD from 2019. The proportion of income deprivation for under 15s and over 60s has decreased and there are fewer very deprived areas in Croydon under the three domains of Employment; Health deprivation & disability; and Education, skills & training.

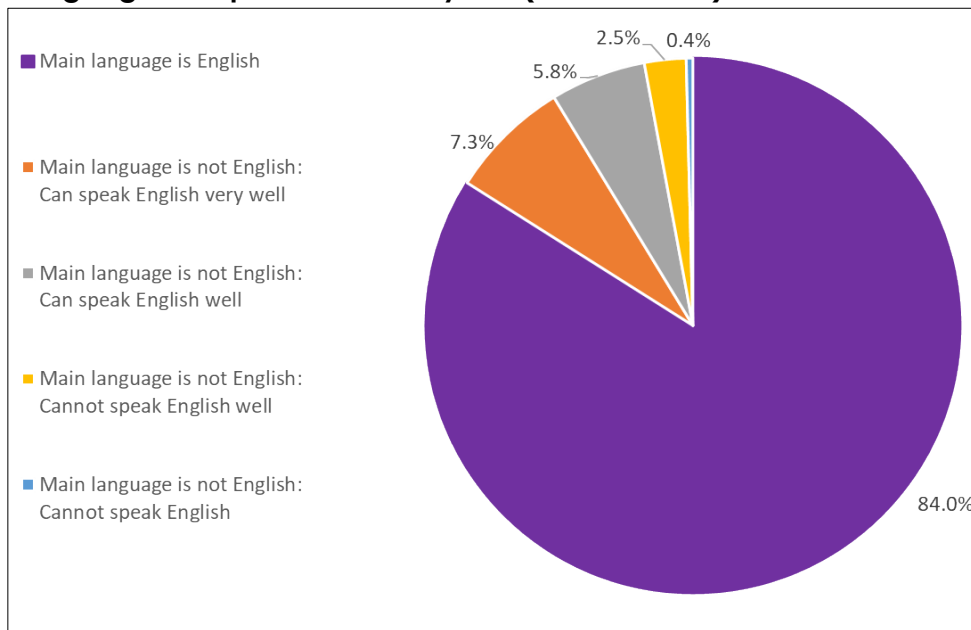
However, IMD 2019 reveals that Croydon is the most deprived of the six Southern Region boroughs in London. Crime remains relatively high across Croydon and under the Barriers to housing & services deprivation domain, more than a third (37.4%) of all LSOAs in Croydon have deprivation scores which put them into the top 10% most deprived LSOAs in the country for this domain. The North and East of the borough remain more deprived than the South.

Deprivation has negative implications on the economic position, health and access to opportunities for residents. It is important to

consider which groups may disproportionately struggle with deprivation, such as those from the Global Majority. Putting measures in place to reduce deprivation across Croydon will improve outcomes for its people and is likely to produce lower crime rates, with people less likely to engage in anti-social behaviour and less reliant on illegal methods to provide for themselves.

Proficiency in English

Language competence in Croydon (Census 2021)



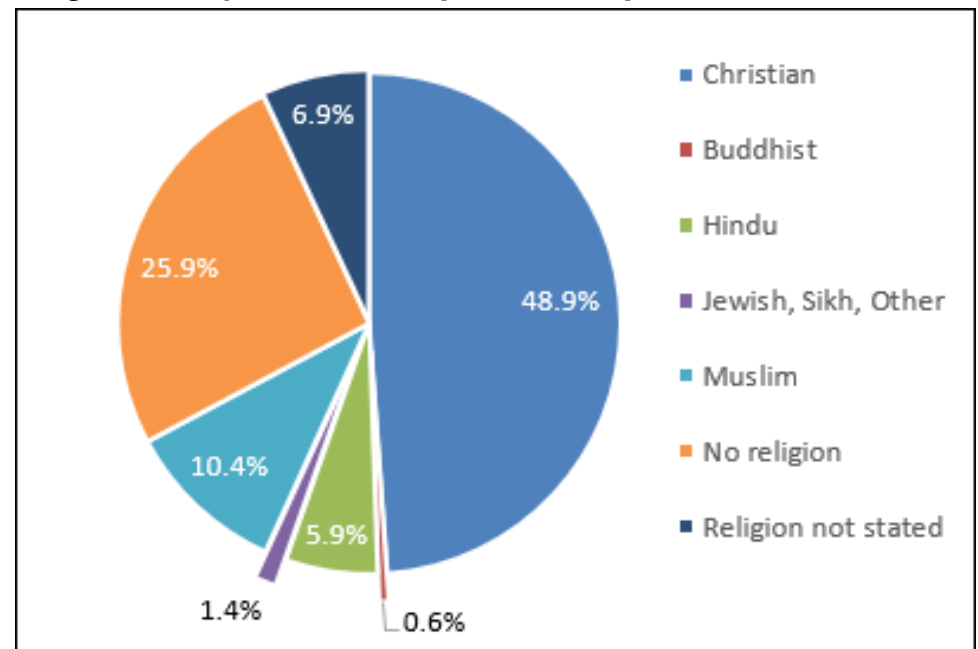
- The vast majority of Croydon’s population speak English, with only 2.9% of people unable to speak English well or at all.
- 16% of Croydon’s population have a main language other than English. 13% of this figure can speak English very well or well.
- Croydon has a much higher proportion of primary and secondary school pupils whose first language is not English compared to Croydon’s Statistical neighbours. Both these

proportions are greater than the national averages in primary (21%) and secondary schools (17%) over the last 5 years.

- Approximately 11,330 people do not speak the language well or at all. We should consider how to meet their needs and explore ways that English proficiency can be improved for this group, to widen their access to public life and reduce their dependency on others to meet their needs such as family members or carers.

Religion

Religion of Croydon residents (Census 2021)



The 2021 Census data shows a significant decline in practice of religion since 2011. Croydon’s Christian population has declined by 7.5% and there has been a 5.9% rise in people that don’t follow any

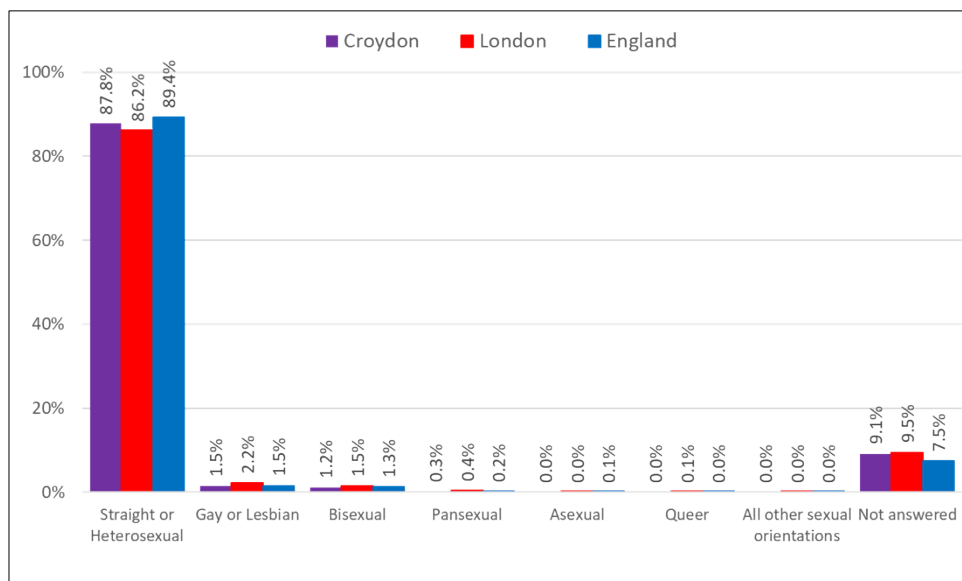
religion. The only religious group which has seen a noticeable increase is the Muslim community with a rise of 2.3%.

The implications of a decline in religious practice may include people of faith being less confident to publicly practise their religion and a lesser understanding in the wider public of religious practices.

For further information on Religion and Belief in Croydon [click here](#).

Sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation (16 year or above) Census 2021



Overall, 3.1% of Croydon respondents to the 2021 Census identified themselves as LGBT+, 1.5% as gay or lesbian, 1.2% bisexual and 0.4% all other sexual orientations. This is lower than the London averages. It is important to note that 9.1% of Croydon

respondents chose not to answer this question, which is also below the London average of 9.5%. This data was not captured in 2011.

Gender identity

In the 2021 Census, 0.2% of people in Croydon identified as a trans man, 0.2% as a trans woman, 0.5% identified differently to their sex registered at birth but gave no specific identity and 0.1% all other gender identities. These are all equivalent to the London averages. It is important to note however that 7.5% of respondents in Croydon chose not to answer this question.

This data was not captured in 2011. The Gender Identity and Research Society (<http://www.gires.org.uk/>) has estimated that nationally 1% of the population may be gender variant to some degree, with 0.2% of the population likely to seek medical treatment, at some stage, to present in the opposite gender.

Disability

The 2021 Census figures showed that 14% of the population in Croydon have a disability under the 2010 Equality Act. This is similar to the London average and below the national average.

8% of disabled Croydon residents said that their disability slightly limited their day-to-day activities, and the other 6% stated that it limited their day-to-day activities significantly. This is similar to the London and national averages.

For further information on individuals with long term health or a disability in Croydon [click here](#).



Education and Skills

Educational outcomes are important as they impact on the level of access to opportunities for people, the employment rates, the economic activity in the borough and levels of deprivation.

- Levels of permanent exclusions from primary and secondary schools are similar to the regional average and lower than the national average.
- Early Years Foundation Stage – the percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development (GLD) in Croydon has been improving every year since 2015 and is above average, nationally and regionally.
- Key Stage 1 – The performance of Croydon pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing, maths and science is below the London average for these four areas. However, excluding science, this is better than the national average in all these areas. (2021/22)
- Key Stage 2 - Attainment is improving in Croydon. 60% of pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, which is below the London average (65%) but above the national average (58%) (2021/22).
- Take up of funded hours in early years settings is still below national and regional levels.
- Key Stage 4 - The average Attainment 8 score per pupil is 47.4, compared with the London average of 52.6 and national average of 48.8 (2021/22).
- Key Stage 5 - The proportion of pupils achieving grades AAB or above continues to be much lower than the regional and national averages.

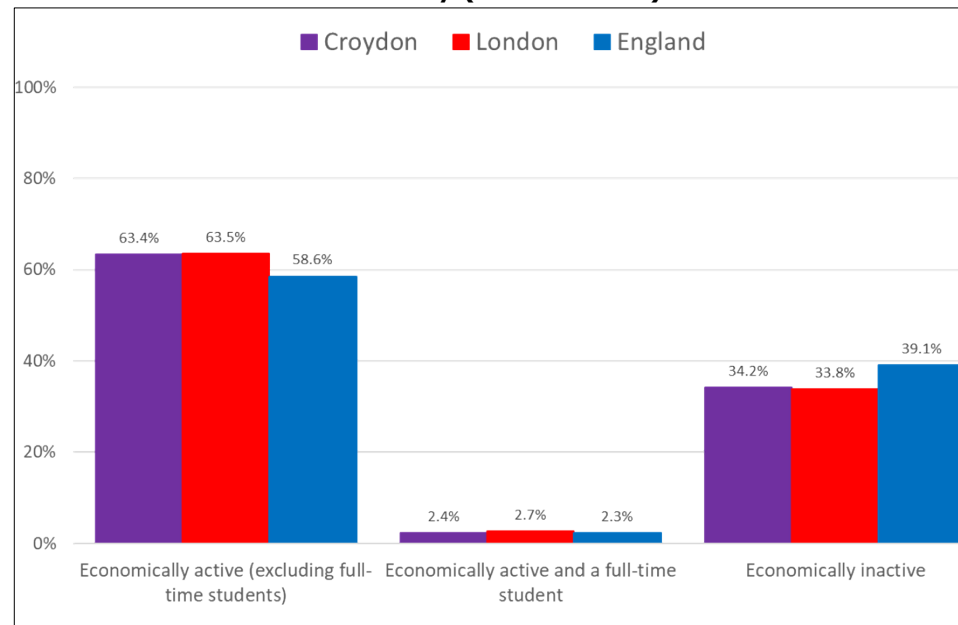


Economy

Croydon has a good level of economic activity but at the same time struggles with a very low job density. A lack of jobs in the borough may increase unemployment rates going forward and this would perpetuate inequalities. A weaker economic position for the people in Croydon may reduce their access to adequate housing, childcare and opportunities for training and education.

- Croydon's economic activity status is similar to London and above the national level, but job density is 0.55 (2021), much lower than London (1.02) and national (0.85) levels.

Individuals – economic activity (Census 2021)



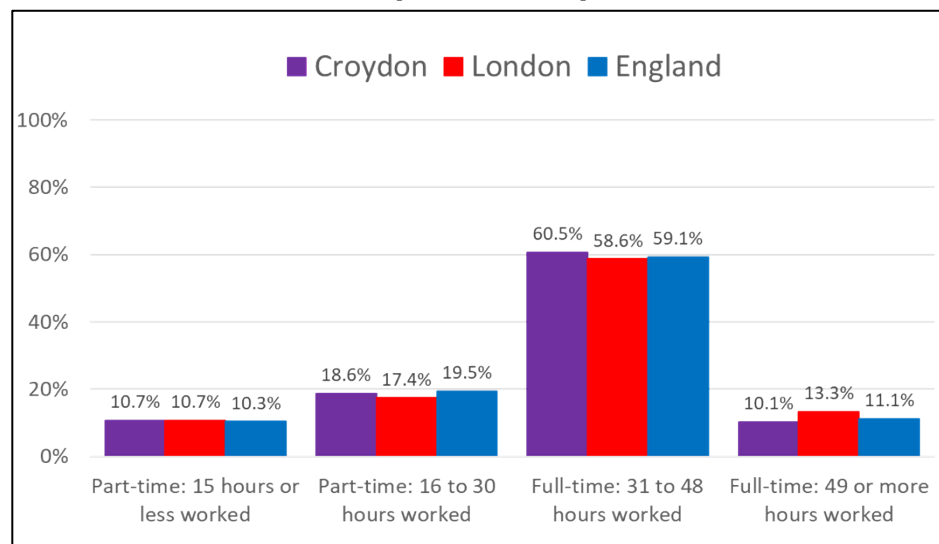
- The proportion of out of work claimants is falling in all age ranges but is still higher than the regional and national averages.
- The number of businesses is falling but survival rates in Croydon are higher than the regional and national averages.
- The retail industry only makes up 10% of all Croydon industries. If Croydon is to attract more people, the retail offer needs to be improved.
- 70% of the Croydon workforce work fulltime for a minimum of 31 hours a week, and some of this cohort work in excess of 49 hours a week.
- 1 in 10 (9.6%) of Croydon's working age population have never worked or been long-term employed. This is similar to the London average (10.1%).
- There has been a huge increase in unemployment for 18-24 year olds and 50-64 year olds since April 2020.



Although Croydon is one of the more affordable boroughs in London, insufficient housing for groups such as the Global Majority and single parents is a significant challenge for Croydon. A lack of adequate housing perpetuates inequalities in other areas of life such as education, employment, and overall wellbeing.

- Croydon remains one of the more affordable areas live in London, for both buying and renting.
- As of the 2021 Census, Croydon has 152, 900 households which is the highest number in London.
- In 2020/21, Croydon was in the second quartile in London for providing affordable units of housing. In 2021/22, 338 of the 2,121 new dwellings built were affordable homes.
- In 2020/21, approximately three quarters of homeless households in Croydon were made up of residents from Global Majority and other racialised backgrounds.
- The percentage of care leavers in Croydon known to be in suitable accommodation is much lower than the regional and national figures.
- Social housing in Croydon is mainly concentrated in the northern parts and the eastern edge of the borough.
- Most people who approach the Council for help due to being homeless or at risk of homelessness are lone parents with dependent children. They currently make up just over 50% of the Council's accepted cases for temporary accommodation.

Individuals – hours worked (Census 2021)

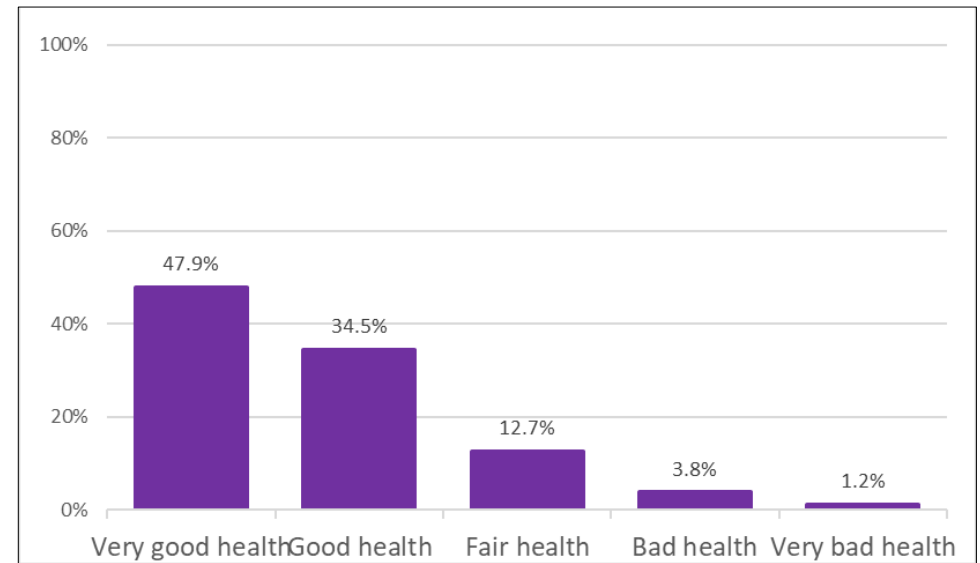




The average life expectancy has increased, which can be seen in the large proportion of Croydon residents who stated they are in very good or good health. This is a great sign of progress, but this also raises challenges on how to meet increased demand on services. Furthermore, a high proportion of overweight and obese adults may lead to increased costs for health services. Certain groups may face greater barriers to living a healthy lifestyle such as the Global Majority and those with disabilities, which must be considered when addressing health outcomes.

- The majority of Croydon residents (82.4%) who answered the General Health question in the 2021 Census stated that they were in very good or good health.
- Over the last 5 years, the estimated dementia diagnosis rate for over 65s has been going up every year. For the past 2 years, this has been higher than the rate in London and England.
- The conception rate of under 18s is on a downward trend and is below the national average and close to the London average (2020 OHID Fingertips Public Health Data).
- Childhood immunisation rates continue to be lower in Croydon than across London and England.
- Croydon has the 7th highest proportion of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese in London. (2020/21).

General health in Croydon (Census 2021)



Croydon Equalities Pledges

The Croydon Equalities Pledges have been created so that organisations can reinforce the borough's commitment to treat everyone equally and fairly and giving them the freedom to be who they are.

Equalities Pledge

1. Positively promote the equality of opportunity for individuals of all characteristics namely: disability, gender, race, age, sexual orientation, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership and gender identity, by recognising significant celebrations and awareness days and ensuring that workplace practices do not discriminate against any groups.
2. Ensure that there is mandatory training for all staff at all levels in equality, diversity and inclusion every two years, attendance is monitored, and 100% targets set with staff and managers held to account.
3. Ensure a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying, publicising the staff code of conduct, providing staff with information on what it is and encouraging people to safely challenge this where it occurs ensuring that people are not treated less favourably for doing so.
4. Positively encourage applications from diverse and under-represented groups when advertising for posts and taking actions to respond to under representation in this area identified by organisational data.
5. Use anonymous recruitment processes which don't reveal details of race, age, gender, disability or socio-economic status.
6. Identify and annually publish pay gaps based on ethnicity, disability and gender and putting actions in place to reduce such pay gaps.
7. Provide reasonable adjustments for disabled staff in interviews and employment.
8. Develop and agree an equality policy for the organisation which all staff sign up to and review it every 3 years.
9. Collect data on the protected characteristics of staff and aiming to have a workforce which reflects the Croydon community by using positive action recruitment practices and encourage career development for underrepresented staff.
10. Undertake annual staff surveys to identify the impact of organisational actions on employees lived experience and psychological safety at work.

George Floyd Race Matters Pledge

1. We are working to become an anti-racist organisation by embedding this in our strategies, actions and behaviours and by making a difference to the lived experience of our communities.
2. Committing to zero tolerance of racism from employees, residents, customers and service users by challenging racist behaviour or stereotypes expressed by individuals.

3. Developing our knowledge of anti-racist practice by listening and responding to experiences of staff and the wider community.
4. Developing an understanding of the role that power, privilege, identity and disadvantage that impacts on the lived experience of all staff in particular those from African/African Caribbean, other African heritage communities.
5. Undertaking whole workforce training on unconscious bias and encouraging staff to safely challenge such bias during day to day conversations.
6. Developing cultural awareness by learning more about African/African Caribbean and African other history and cultural practices to develop understanding of staff and customers through podcasts, videos, documentaries and by attending events.
7. Promoting good relationships between groups which share cultural similarities and those that don't by encouraging communities to celebrate together as one.
8. Identifying and addressing any ethnicity pay gaps.
9. Ensuring that recruitment processes from application, shortlisting, interview and appointment conducted in a manner that facilitates positive action in recruitment such as media campaigns, advertising imagery and interview panels that represent the diversity of the borough's population where possible.
10. Developing plans to address challenges where race may not be the only factor and the needs of people may also be in relation to: disability, age, sexual orientation, sex or other protected characteristics.

Glossary

Ally

An individual who supports and advocates for people from a protected characteristic that is not their own (typically) straight and/or cis person who supports members of the LGBT community.

Antisemitism

The following working definition of antisemitism by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance was adopted by the Council in [2018](#):

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Cisgender or cis

Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

Discrimination and Harassment

- Discrimination is treating someone less favourably based on their membership of a protected characteristic (for example, because of your gender, race or disability) [[EHRC](#)].
- Harassment is unwanted attention that violates the dignity of individuals and creates an intimidating, offensive and hostile environment. This may range from mildly unpleasant remarks to physical violence [[EHRC](#)].

Diverse or diversity

A mix of different kinds of people in the broadest sense, encompassing both physical and intrinsic differences including, young and old people, disabled and non-disabled people, occupations, personalities, or family composition [[EHRC](#)].

Duties

These are things the law says a public body must do.

Equality

Creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and fulfil their potential. It is part of a legislative framework which addresses unfair discrimination.

Equity

This term acknowledges that we don't all start at the same starting point, so adjustments can be used to redress the balance.

Equality Duty

As a public body, the Council is required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED], as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The PSED requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the Council being exposed to costly, time consuming and reputation-damaging legal challenges.

Gender reassignment

A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex [[Equality Act 2010, Section 7\(1\)](#)].

Global Majority

A collective term for people who identify as African, Asian, African Caribbean, Dual Heritage or originating from the Global South. The phrase 'Global South' refers broadly to the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa and Oceania. It refers to countries many of which were previously termed 'Third World' and 'Periphery'. It refers to regions outside Europe and North America that are mostly (though not exclusively) low-income countries, often politically or culturally marginalised. Globally this community currently represents approximately 80% of the world's population [Rosemary Campbell-Stephens MBE, Leeds Beckett University].

Good Level of Development (GLD)

GLD is the most widely used single measure of child development in the early years. It is a measure of attainment, not progress.

Inequity

This means lack of fairness and/or justice.

Inclusion

The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of other minority groups.

Indices of multiple deprivation (IMD)

Indices of multiple deprivation are widely used datasets within the UK to classify the relative deprivation of small areas. Multiple components of deprivation are weighted with different strengths and compiled into a single score of deprivation. [[GOV.UK](#)]

Islamophobia

The following working definition, developed by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims, was adopted by the Council in [2021](#):

“Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.”

Contemporary examples of Islamophobia in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in encounters between religions and non-religions in the public sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, instigating or justifying the killing or harming of Muslims in the name of a racist/fascist ideology, or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Muslims as such, or of Muslims as a collective group, such as, especially but not exclusively, conspiracies about Muslim entryism in politics, government or other societal institutions; the myth of Muslim identity having a unique propensity for terrorism, and claims of a demographic 'threat' posed by Muslims or of a 'Muslim takeover'.
- Accusing Muslims as a group of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Muslim person or group of Muslim individuals, or even for acts committed by non-Muslims.
- Accusing Muslims as a group, or Muslim majority states, of inventing or exaggerating Islamophobia, ethnic cleansing or genocide perpetrated against Muslims.
- Accusing Muslim citizens of being more loyal to the 'Ummah' (transnational Muslim community) or to their countries of origin, or to the alleged priorities of Muslims worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying Muslim populations the right to self-determination e.g., by claiming that the existence of an independent Palestine or Kashmir is a terrorist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of Muslims behaviours that are not expected or demanded of any other groups in society, e.g. loyalty tests.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic Islamophobia (e.g. Muhammad being a paedophile, claims of Muslims spreading Islam by the sword or subjugating minority groups under their rule) to characterize Muslims as being 'sex groomers', inherently violent or incapable of living harmoniously in plural societies.
- Holding Muslims collectively responsible for the actions of any Muslim majority state, whether secular or constitutionally Islamic.

LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi, trans)

- **Lesbian** - Refers to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.
- **Gay** - Refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. It is also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality - some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.
- **Bi** - Bi is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender. Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, bisexual, pan, queer, and some other non-monosexual and non-monoromantic identities.
- **Trans** - An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to)

transgender, transsexual, gender-queer (GQ), gender-fluid, non-binary, gender-variant, crossdresser, genderless, a gender, nongender, third gender, bi-gender, trans man, trans woman, trans masculine, trans feminine and neutrois.

LSOAs

A Lower Super Output Area typically contains around 1,500 residents. Super output areas produce a set of areas of consistent size, whose boundaries would not change (unlike electoral wards), suitable for the publication of data such as the Indices of Deprivation. [\[ONS\]](#)

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage and Civil Partnership means someone who is legally married or in a civil partnership. Marriage can either be between a man and a woman, or between partners of the same sex. Civil partnership is between a man and a woman, or of partners of the same sex [\[EHRC\]](#).

Minoritised

This refers to groups who have been oppressed by social power structures and systems. The term may be used to describe the LGBT+ community, disabled people, women and groups experiencing poverty or who are affected by socio economic impact. Minoritised groups may also be racialised groups; however, the term minoritised has wider implications.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding. [\[EHRC\]](#)

Protected characteristics

These are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Public bodies

Public bodies include government departments, schools, hospitals and councils.

Racialised groups

This refers to racial groups that have been racialised by the structural and social power structures. This term is often used by academics.

Vulnerability

A combined range of factors could make people more vulnerable or place them in situations that lead to greater vulnerability. For example, some people are vulnerable due to a particular condition such as mental or physical illness as well find themselves placed in vulnerable situations such as living in a poor area with a lack of access to jobs, healthcare or housing. It is a combination of social and economic factors that place them at a disadvantage.